

Clinton and his crowd are returned to the White House.

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GENERAL CLINTON, LOSING THE DRUG WAR
(By David Tell)

Bill Clinton is mostly talk. He enjoys daily political combat and negotiates its demands with rare talent. But he has never been much for actual, week-in, week-out government. Over any given administrative term in his long career, the Clinton record is thickly stained with the evidence both of his personal disengagement and of the ideological inclinations of his loosely supervised appointees. So the early months of a Clinton election year always look the same: He mounts a slick and furious propaganda offensive to muddy that evidence, the better to confuse and silence his opponents. What looks bad, Clinton knows, can often be made to look good—if you jabber about it enough.

This is your president's brain. And this is your president's brain on drugs: Clinton is justifiably nervous that his credibility gap in the nation's drug war—still a major public preoccupation—might be exploited by Republicans in the fall.

Candidate Clinton didn't inhale. President Clinton's surgeon general, Joycelyn Elders, made repeated pronouncements on the virtues of drug legalization. Before the ink was dry on his presidential oath, Clinton gutted the White House drug office with a two-fold, shabby purpose: satisfying a campaign pledge to trim his staff, and purging a hundred-odd career civil servants whose only sin (shades of Travelgate) was to have worked under a Republican administration. That massacre remains the president's best known drug-war initiative; three years later, he has spent very little time on the effort. "I've been in Congress for over two decades," Democratic Rep. Charles B. Rangel grumped late last year. "I have never, never, never seen a president who cares less" about drugs.

So it is now, predictably, "inoculation" season, as the Clinton campaign embarks on a weeks-long media tour designed to portray the president as fully and effectively engaged in the war on drugs. Much of it is typical hokum. A talk-show schlockmeister has been recruited to produce anti-drug television commercials; "Montel Williams's leadership on this crucial effort is inspiring," bumbles the White House. A Gallup poll on the drug war has been commissioned, as the White House admits without embarrassment, "to demonstrate thinking which will support our efforts." And the president himself—in a spare Miami moment between rounds of golf and multimillion-dollar Democratic fundraisers—has unveiled a "new" drugfighting strategy. He is "working hard in Washington," he tells a group of network cameramen and middle-school students. And his work is paying off, since "every year for the last three years... drug use has dropped."

We'll come back to this falsehood in a moment. Were the Clinton drug-fighting record purely a matter of Elders-like bloopers and mere inattention, the president's current show of concern—and the debut of his newly minted tough-guy "drug czar," retired army general Barry McCaffrey—might be sufficient protection against GOP election-year complaints. But it really isn't true that Clinton has done "nothing" about drugs, as Republicans may want to charge. It's worse, far worse: His administration has engineered the most significant redirection of federal drug policy in several decades. This is a poorly reported story. And an alarming one that begs for informative political debate.

Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, the federal government pursued what might fair-

ly be described as a "do everything" strategy against illegal drugs. Executive-branch agencies conducted crop eradication and criminal investigative efforts in foreign countries. They launched "interdiction" programs against smugglers operating in the so-called transit zone between those countries and the United States, and on our borders. They undertook a dizzying variety of law-enforcement, drug-prevention, and rehabilitative-treatment initiatives here at home. It was a richly funded campaign; total federal spending on the drug war rose nearly 700 percent between 1981 and 1992. And it roughly coincided with a more than 50 percent decline in the rate of overall drug use nationwide, from its historical high in 1979 to its subsequent low in the final year of the Bush administration.

There was a standard Democratic critique of government drug policy during this period of Republican presidencies: The executive branch was supposedly placing exaggerated emphasis on efforts to reduce the supply of illegal drugs to American neighborhoods, and shortchanging an equally necessary therapeutic approach to addicts and schoolchildren. The drug war's most visibly warlike aspects—its overseas and interdiction programs—were subjected to particular scorn. As the Customs Service was spending millions of dollars to get radar balloons tangled in high-tension electrical wires on the Southwest border, the scoffers said, cocaine addicts went homeless and died for want of bed-space in federally funded treatment facilities.

Of course, it is a simple fact that federal law can only be enforced by the federal government, and that effort—G-men and prisons, most obviously—is intrinsically more expensive than even the most lavish education and drug-treatment programs could ever be. And so the federal drug budget will always be heavily weighted toward "supply reduction" (and away from "demand reduction") activities. Even in a Democratic administration. President Clinton still spends twice as much money on restricting drug supply as on ending demand.

But he is spending it very differently. Democratic hostility to drug-war "militarism" is alive and well in the Clinton administration. Under his supervision, the federal government is now conducting an anti-drug effort almost exclusively inside the United States. At our borders and beyond, the drug war has, for the most part, been canceled. By formal White House directive.

In 1993, the administration instituted what is technically called a "controlled shift" of federal drug-war assets. Money and personnel devoted to anti-smuggling efforts in the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and on the U.S.-Mexican border were ostensibly redeployed directly to the Latin American countries in which most illegal drugs originate. But that redeployment has never actually occurred. The federal drug-budget accounts from which any new Latin American initiative could be funded are 55 percent smaller today than in 1992. The old-fashioned anti-smuggling effort has been "shifted" to nowhere. It has been eviscerated.

The result? Coast Guard cocaine and marijuana seizures are down 45 to 90 percent, respectively, since 1991. In 1994, the Customs Service let two million commercial trucks pass through three of the busiest ports-of-entry on the Mexican border without seizing a single kilogram of cocaine. Between 1993 and early 1995, the estimated smuggling "disruption rate" achieved by federal drug interdiction agencies fell 53 percent—the equivalent of 84 more metric tons of cocaine and marijuana arriving unimpeded in the United States each year. Drug Enforcement Agency figures suggest that cocaine and heroin are

now available on American streets in near-record purity—and at near-record-low retail prices.

Which can only be evidence that the supply of illegal drugs on American streets has significantly expanded on Bill Clinton's watch. Because the only other possible explanation, that the demand for drugs has fallen, is at variance with the facts. The president was sadly mistaken—or, well, he lied—when he told those Miami schoolchildren that American drug use "has dropped" every year since he took office. Drug use has steadily risen since 1992, especially among the young. Overall teenage drug use is up 55 percent. Marijuana consumption by teenagers has almost doubled.

This is a pretty striking picture of deliberate government decision-making gone disastrously awry. It's the president's fault. He has proposed nothing to correct it, Gen. McCaffrey and Montel Williams notwithstanding. And he should be called to account. All the president's facile election-year speechifying aside, there are serious differences of personnel and policy that divide this Democratic administration from the Republican administration that would replace it in 1997. Where the drug war is concerned, as in so many other respects, those differences should be clear. They do not flatter President Clinton.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KEMPTHORNE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, the Senator from Iowa has made a 10-minute attack on the President on an issue dealing with the fight on drugs. I ask that the same courtesy be extended and that I be permitted to speak in morning business for 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE FIGHT ON DRUGS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, let me say, Mr. President, that it always saddens me when the floor of the U.S. Senate is turned into a place to debate issues regarding the Presidential race. I think it is very important that when things are stated on the floor that are not true, we have an opportunity to respond. I thank the chairman of the Budget Committee for giving me that opportunity.

There is a lot of talk around here about the failure of this President to crack down on the issue of drug enforcement. I want to set the record straight. Federal drug prosecutions are up 13 percent from 1994. Federal prosecutors achieved an 84 percent conviction rate in all drug cases in 1995. So we are beginning to see a change. During the past 3 years, there has been a 9.4 percent increase in prosecutions of the toughest, most complex drug cases. There are now about 48,000 convicted

drug dealers in Federal prisons, three-fifths of the total Federal inmate population, and the highest number in history.

There has been a drug-testing initiative. The President ordered Federal prosecutors to seek drug testing of all people arrested on Federal criminal charges, and is seeking \$42 million to fund this initiative in 1997. These tests will help Federal judges determine whether a defendant should be granted bail.

The Justice Department has funded 65 grants, totaling \$8.5 million to help communities establish and expand drug courts that help break the cycle of drugs and crime. The 1994 Crime Act authorized \$1 billion through the year 2000 to support State and local drug courts.

So, Mr. President, people can come down here and make speeches about our President. But at least have the facts. I think this President, and every President, is entitled to the facts. Who is the President that came up with the idea of putting 100,000 cops on the beat? It was this President of the United States of America, Bill Clinton, who came up with the idea that we need more cops on the beat, because it is prevention to have cops on the beat, it is prevention to have community policing. It is the other side of the aisle that wants to rescind that law providing 100,000 cops on the beat and replace it with a block grant, and who knows where the money will go. We want cops on the beat. We are on our way to getting it done. Which President signed the Violence Against Women Act? I am so proud of that because I worked with Senator JOE BIDEN on it for 5 long years. It was this President. And we are going after violence in domestic situations. We are going after the crime of rape. We are working toward making streets safer. Do we have a long way to go? Of course, we do. This is complicated.

Clearly, if we can get drugs out of society, there will be a decrease in crime. We know there is a definite correlation here. We have a President who understands we need enforcement and understands we need very good people to prosecute these cases. We have a President who has cracked down on the border. I come from California, and we are seeing an entirely different situation down there, with large increases in the Border Patrol, and with the U.S. attorney who has just done wonders with the conviction rate of second-time criminal aliens coming back into this country from Mexico. He has prosecuted more of them in 1 year than the previous 5 years altogether.

So when we come down to this floor and we start to use it as a debate over the Presidential race, I wish we would not do it. But if we do it, let us be honorable about it. Let us be factual about it. This is the President who fought so hard to take prevention, effective prosecution, enforcement, interdiction—take all of those aspects of fighting

drugs and putting them into one policy, getting through an effective crime bill, and making sure that in fact we are waging an effective war on drugs. This is the President who understands this issue.

So I want to thank my chairman of the Budget Committee for giving me this opportunity to put into the RECORD what the record truly is. And the fact of the matter is since I have been here all I have heard from many on the other side is a desire to repeal the crime bill, repeal the ban on assault weapons which are used by gangs, repeal the Brady bill which has kept weapons out of the hands of 67,000 people who have had mental health problems in the past. We do not want those people getting guns.

I appreciate this opportunity to correct the record.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET

The Senate continued with the consideration of the concurrent resolution. Mr. BOND addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 3971 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3965

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk in the second degree.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Missouri [Mr. BOND] proposes an amendment No. 3971 to amendment numbered 3965.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

In the pending amendment:

On page 30, line 5, decrease the amount by \$175,000,000.

On page 30, line 6, decrease the amount by \$7,000,000.

On page 30, line 11, decrease the amount by \$907,000,000.

On page 30, line 12, decrease the amount by \$246,000,000.

On page 30, line 17, decrease the amount by \$2,256,000,000.

On page 30, line 18, decrease the amount by \$1,920,000,000.

On page 30, line 23, decrease the amount by \$3,621,000,000.

On page 30, line 24, decrease the amount by \$3,033,000,000.

On page 31, line 4, decrease the amount by \$3,302,000,000.

On page 31, line 5, decrease the amount by \$3,124,000,000.

On page 31, line 10, decrease the amount by \$2,355,000,000.

On page 31, line 11, decrease the amount by \$2,187,000,000.

On page 33, line 5, increase the amount by \$175,000,000.

On page 33, line 6, increase the amount by \$7,000,000.

On page 33, line 12, increase the amount by \$907,000,000.

On page 33, line 13, increase the amount by \$246,000,000.

On page 33, line 19, increase the amount by \$2,256,000,000.

On page 33, line 20, increase the amount by \$1,920,000,000.

On page 34, line 1, increase the amount by \$3,621,000,000.

On page 34, line 2, increase the amount by \$3,033,000,000.

On page 34, line 8, increase the amount by \$1,708,000,000.

On page 34, line 9, increase the amount by \$1,552,000,000.

On page 40, line 23, increase the amount by \$1,594,000,000.

On page 40, line 24, increase the amount by \$1,572,000,000.

On page 41, line 5, increase the amount by \$2,355,000,000.

On page 41, line 6, increase the amount by \$2,187,000,000.

On page 45, line 15, increase the amount by \$7,000,000,000.

On page 45, line 16, increase the amount by \$10,952,000,000.

On page 47, line 9, increase the amount by \$175,000,000.

On page 47, line 11, increase the amount by \$7,000,000.

On page 47, line 13, increase the amount by \$907,000,000.

On page 47, line 14, increase the amount by \$246,000,000.

On page 47, line 16, increase the amount by \$2,256,000,000.

On page 47, line 17, increase the amount by \$1,920,000,000.

On page 47, line 19, increase the amount by \$3,621,000,000.

On page 47, line 20, increase the amount by \$3,033,000,000.

On page 47, line 22, increase the amount by \$3,302,000,000.

On page 47, line 23, increase the amount by \$3,124,000,000.

On page 48, line 2, increase the amount by \$2,730,000,000.

On page 48, line 3, increase the amount by \$2,623,000,000.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous agreement the debate on the Bond amendment is limited to 1 hour.

Mr. BOND. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, my colleagues, this is a simple amendment. It increases function 700 for veterans by \$13 billion over the period of 1997 to 2002, and to pay for that it increases the reconciliation instructions for welfare reform by \$13 billion which raises the total number under the President's plan from \$39 to \$52 billion.

I think it is time that we get back to talking about the budget which is the subject in front of us today. We have just had a very clear-cut indication in this body that people want to talk about a real budget that does not make drastic cuts in the last year. They said it was a bad idea. This is the first good opportunity to vote on the President's proposal to achieve the balanced budget by taking a tremendous whack out of discretionary programs including those items which he cited as his high priorities in the last 2 years.

I am very pleased that our colleagues unanimously on both sides of the aisle said that did not make any sense, and that we should not go at it in a meat ax way. I think we ought to start taking a look at responsible adjustments to try to bring this proposal back into the realm of reality.